Retort Courteous.

At a dinner party the other evening a callow youth found himself seated between two young men who own a merchant tailoring establishment.

"I—aw—have been placed between two—aw—tailors, it seems," remarked his dudelets.

"Yes," replied one of the young men, "and at the present stage of the game we have only one goose between us."

Looked the Part.

The Cop—Yes, sir, yer honor, an' as I was passing by the corner the prisoner here, who was blockading de sidewalk, sprang at me troat and struck me wid his fist, and it was only by superhuman effort dat I brung him here.

All Her Faults.

"My client," said the counsel for the plaintiff in a breach-of-promise case, "informs me that you frequently put your arm around her waist."

"Sure I did," admitted the defendant, "but it was always at her request and I am too good-natured to decline a pressing invitation."

The One Essential.

"I believe," said the sanguine, but visionary, inventor, "if I only had time I could make a successful flying machine."

"Of course, you could make it all right if you only had plenty of time. Time flies, you know."

Thoughtful, Indeed.

"Van Slick is very thoughtful."

"How so?"

"Why, he has arranged an automatic atomizer on his auto which sprinkles perfume along the street and overcomes the odor of the gasoline."

Painless.

"Do you believe in the old maxim, 'No pains, no gains'?"

'Hardly. With me it's 'Any pain, no gain.'"

"Indeed! What business are you at?"

"Oh, I'm a dentist."

Get Rich Quick.

Gunner—"They say Barker has been married three times. Did he make any money out of marrying so often?"

Guyer—"I should say so. He made as much money out of marrying as a St Joe minister."

Joys of Wedlock.

"We may as well come to an understanding right now," said the angry husband. "It may be hard for you to hear the truth from me, but——"

"Indeed it is," interrupted the patient wife, "I hear it so seldom from you."

He Coughed Up.

"Say, dad," began the senator's son, "those big guns that they shoot torpedoes out of just give a sort of cough when they get down to business, don't they?"

"Yes."

"You are a big gun, aren't you, dad?"

"They say that I am."

"Well, I need a hundred."

What Did He Mean?

They were exchanging views.

"I wouldn't run away with any girl. I remember going up to the old man and asking him for his daughter. He told me to go to Hades."

"And did you go?"

"Well," he mused hesitatingly and reflectively, "I married the girl."—New Yorker.

A Benefactor.

Weary Walker—I'm ashamed o' yer! Sawin' up wood for kindlin'!

Ragson Tatters—Aw, g'on! dis is locust wood.

Weary Walker—W'at's dat got ter do wid it?

Ragson Tatters—Why, you chump, dis is de kind o' wood dat policemen's clubs is made out of.

The Only Lay He Cared For.

"Mr. Snooks, which of the lovely warblers of the wood do you prefer?" said the poetic summer girl to the city man whose soul was not attuned to nature.

"There is only one bird whose lay I care for," he replied.

"And that is?"

"The hen."

Retroactive.

"Why do you sell this brand of shirts only?" asked the transient customer.

"Because it is the most fashionable," replied the swell haberdasher.

"Indeed? What makes it the most fashionable?"

"The fact that we sell it."

Squirming Out.

"Oh, George!" she exclaimed, bitterly, "I heard you tell your friend that you didn't love me any more. Boo hoo!"

"Don't cry, dear," he whispered tenderly, "I mean it as a compliment. Of course I couldn't love you any more than I do now."

Very Sad.

Deacon Fowler—Ye seemed greatly affected at th' sermon I preached.

Farmer Tenderheart—Yes. Yer chin went up and down with them whiskers on, an' reminded me so much of our poor dead Billy Goat that I just burst right out a-cryin' an' couldn't help it.

Touching Story.

Charlie—"Whew, but it was close in that church festival!"

Tom—"Did you feel relieved when you got outside.

Charlie—"I should say so. My pockets were clean."

Diagnosis.

Softleigh—"I say, doctah, do you—aw—think I have the bwain fevah?"

Doctor—"No, indeed; but you have the fever, all right."

Seek for Strange Beast

New Zealand is such a wonderland of animals and reptiles and birds today, and has been such a wonderland of them in the past, that the scientific world is ready to believe that the waitoreke really exists there and explorers are hunting for it now.

What is the waitoreke?

Is there a waitoreke at all?

Zoologists all over the world are willing to pay a big price for the answer to either or both of these questions. If there is such a thing, it is the most wonderful beast yet known—more wonderful even than the duckbill, the four-footed, egg-laying furred mammal with a duck's beak.

Like the duck-bill, the waitoreke is—that is, if it "is" at all—a native of the Australian continent. The stories about it come from the folk of interior New Zealand.

The New Zealand natives declare that it is a mammal that dwells in the water. Its home is said to be in the deep mountain lakes and, unlike such water-loving mammals, as the otter or the seal, it swims in the water like a fish and goes ashore only for short periods.

But, say these natives, it is in no way like a seal. It has no webbed feet, but claws; and, furthermore, it crawls ashore and lays eggs like a turtle or a lizard.

They add a further strange statement; it is that this wonderful beast has mighty jaws, long and slender, armed with saw-like teeth.

Only a few years ago science would have dismissed the story as a mad fable. But to-day so many strange stories have been proven true that zoologists are not in a hurry to discredit this one.

With Sir Harry Johnston discovering the okapi, which turns out to be a creature that was thought to have died out before the dawn of history; with men searching in Madagascar for the giant bird aepyornis, also dismissed years ago as being an extinct monster with the growing belief that a form of prehistoric giant sloth is alive in South America, men of science are almost ready to believe that the waitoreke may turn out to be a living survivor of some form of prehistoric link-animal—some link between beasts and reptiles.

The description of the long, slender, terrible snout with sawlike teeth makes them think of the long, slender snouts of the ichthyocaurus.

The fact that this waitoreke of the story lays eggs adds to the resemblance.

Good in Slang Phrases

Many purists bewail the prevalence of slang in the spoken language of the period. Has it never occurred to them that in the vast majority of instances slang is relatively soft and harmless, that it is seldom profane, and that what common speech has suffered from interjections of slang and cant phrases has been more than counteracted by the disuse of hard old Anglo-Saxon swear words? Thus the language is really the gainer, and usage is making much of the slang good English. Take any good dictionary lately from the press, and it will be found to contain literally hundreds of words that were considered slang and not to be spoken in polite conversation, a dozen or twenty-five or fifty years ago. Likewise, take any standard novel of three, four or five generations ago, which reflects the customs and people of its period, and it will be found that some of the leading characters in it were given to politely damning various parts of themselves and about everything else on the slightest provocation, in any company whatsoever.

In the days of Sheridan it was considered good form for the gallant gentleman to consign himself to perdition, piecemeal or as a whole, while paying tribute to the charms of the ladies with whom he was conversing. Thackeray, in person and in his novels, let drop swear words occasionally that would not now be tolerated in a gentleman's parlor. There was a famous and brilliant lawyer of Charleston, who flourished not long before the outbreak of the civil war, who swore plausibly, artistically and easily in polite company, and told risque stories in the most select circles; and he was accounted among the most delightful company to be found within the broad expanse of the country. In the "good old days" of long ago it was regarded as a gentleman's privilege to swear, and if his oaths were nicely chosen no offence was felt. It is not so now. Not that profanity is obsolete, but it is pretty nearly so in polite society. It is principally indulged in by uncultured persons, or by the tipsy. Occasionally the gentleman may let slip an oath, under provocation, but in such instances he is careful to note that there is no woman within earshot. Men have a higher and finer respect for women, for themselves and for the language than in former times.

Even with the Brakeman

"Because I am a railroad man," said George Gould, "railroad happenings and incidents interest me. My friends, aware of this, bring me whatever odd railway news they come upon. Thus I heard the other day of a good revenge.

"It seems that, at a suburban station, a train was starting off one morning when an elderly man rushed across the platform and jumped on one of the slowly moving cars.

"The rear end brakeman who was standing by, reached up, grabbed the old man's coattails and pulled him off the train.

"'There,' he said, sternly, 'I have saved your life. Don't ever try to jump on like that again.'

"'Thank you,' said the old man, calmly. 'Thank you for your thoughtful kindness. It is three hours till the next train, isn't it?'

"'Three and a quarter,' said the brakeman.

"The long train, meanwhile, had been slowly gliding by, slowly gathering speed. Finally the last car appeared. This was the brakeman's car, the one for which he had been waiting, and, with the easy grace that is born of long practice, he sailed majestically onto it

"But the old gentleman seized him by the coat and with a strong jerk pulled him off, at the same time saying, grimly:

"'One good turn deserves another. You saved my life; I have saved yours. Now we are quits.'"